

Overview

The Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) is a voluntary program established for the purpose of restoring and enhancing forest ecosystems to: 1) promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species, 2) improve biodiversity; and 3) enhance carbon sequestration.

The HFRP was signed into law as part of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003. The program is authorized to be carried out from 2004 through 2008.

Benefits

Restoring and protecting forests contributes positively to the economy of our nation, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations, and improves environmental quality.

Safe Harbor will be made available to landowners enrolled in the HFRP who agree, for a specified period, to restore or improve their land for threatened or endangered species habitat. In exchange, they avoid future regulatory restrictions on the use of that land protected under the Endangered Species Act.

Enrollment Options

The Program offers three enrollment options:

- 1) A 10-year cost-share agreement; for which the landowner may

receive 50 percent of the cost of the approved conservation practices,

- 2) A 30-year easement, for which the landowner may receive 75 percent of the market value of the enrolled land plus 75 percent of the cost of the approved conservation practices, or
- 3) An easement of not more than 99-years, for which landowners may receive 75 percent of the market value of the enrolled land plus the cost of the approved conservation practices.

Eligibility

To be eligible for enrollment, land must be private land which will restore, enhance, or measurably increase the likelihood of recovery of a threatened or endangered species, must improve biological diversity, or increase carbon sequestration.

For More Information

If you need more information about HFRP, please contact your local USDA Service Center, listed in the telephone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture, or your local conservation district. Information is available on the Internet at:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>